

## **Governor Barbour Announces Successful Completion of PLAD Enrollment**

***DOM analysis: large majority of PLADs recipients to pay NO prescription drug costs after transition***

Governor Haley Barbour and Division of Medicaid Executive Director Warren Jones announced today that all 48,000 PLAD (Poverty Level Aged and Disabled) beneficiaries transitioning to Medicare tomorrow have been contacted and offered individualized assistance for enrolling in the federal program and other patient assistance programs that provide prescription drugs at little or no cost.

During an exhaustive three-month process requested by Governor Barbour, Mississippi Medicaid case workers handled an average of 250 PLAD cases per day, completed more than 100,000 forms for beneficiaries and helped PLAD recipients enroll in alternative health care coverage before the October 1 implementation date.

Governor Barbour praised the Division of Medicaid for its work. "Dr. Jones and his staff at Medicaid have done tremendous work for our PLAD population. I wanted these recipients taken care of before the implementation date, and they have done just that," he said. "Our case workers

really care about their PLAD clients and worked hard to make sure they got the assistance they needed,” said Dr. Warren Jones.

In addition to the enrollment assistance program, the Division of Medicaid conducted a statistical analysis of more than 300 random PLAD cases to determine the individual impact of the Medicaid-to-Medicare transition. According to the analysis, a large majority of PLAD recipients will have no out-of-pocket expenses after the change. “I am pleased that our PLAD beneficiaries are not going to experience significant problems getting the prescription drugs they need,” said Governor Barbour.

Governor Barbour announced earlier this month that waivers had been granted by the federal government allowing more than 17,000 special needs PLAD recipients to stay on the program.

The PLAD transition and other Medicaid changes that are part of the recently-passed 2004 Medicaid Reform Act will save the state more than \$100 million. The Division of Medicaid will soon begin implementing other parts of the Act including: a face-to-face redetermination of Medicaid eligibility for every recipient; and the establishment of a “Medical Home” for beneficiaries which will link them with

a primary health care provider and allow for yearly physicals to promote *preventative* rather than costly *reactive* health care.

DOM officials say that any of the small number of PLADs recipients who were unreachable by phone were mailed enrollment forms for alternative prescription drug coverage. “We worked hard to assure that every PLAD recipient had information about the many alternatives available to them,” said Jones.

With the federal waiver in hand and PLAD recipients enrolled in alternative coverage, Governor Barbour said that the state’s Medicaid reform effort is working because the state has “provided a safety net for Mississippi PLADs and a savings for Mississippi Medicaid.”

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